(iii) Reduction in customs duty on Optical Fibre from 85 per cent to 40 percent.

(iv) Reduction in the excise duty on Optical Fibre Cables from 35 percent to 20 percent.

Excise duty on pressure cookers

89. SHRI KRISHAN LAL SHARMA: Will the Minister of FINANCE be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that use of pressure cookers among masses of the country is gradually on the increase;

(b) whether it is also a fact that imposition of excise duty on pressure cookers has discouraged the use of pressure cookers and has encouraged use of more subsidised kerosene;

(c) whether it is also a fact that levy of excise duty on pressure cookers is likely to yield Rs. 4 crores a year whereas the use of more subsidised kerosene is to cost Rs. 17 crores a year;

(d) if so, reasons for imposition of excise duty on pressure cookers; and

(e) if so, whethrer Government propose to review its decision in this regard, if so, when, if not, reasons therefor?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF FINANCE (SHRI M. V. CHANDRASHEKHAR MURTHY): (a) to (d) As part of the overall policy of broadening the tax base and to give protection to the tiny and small units, excise duty on pressure cookers was imposed in this budget at the rate of 10 percent. The effective increase in excise duty will be considerably less as the manufacturers will be able to take full credit of excise duty paid on their inputs. Besides small scale units making pressure cookers will not have to pay any excise duty on their clearances upto Rs. 30 lakhs, and the incidence of duty will be borne only by bigger units. There is no information that the imposition of excise duty has discouraged the use of pressure cookers resulting in greater use of kerosene, and as such it is not possible to quantify the extent of increased use, if any, of subsidised kerosene. Imposition of excise duty on pressure cookers is likely to yield some revenue which is difficult to quantify as Madvat benefits vary from unit to unit. Besides, certain quantity is being made by small scale units also who either pay no excise or pay only a concessional duty.

(e) In view of the above, there is no proposal to withdraw the imposition of excise duty on pressure cookers.

Slow down in the pace of economic development

90. SHRI KRISHAN LAL SHARMA: Will the Minister of FINANCE be pleased to state:

(a) whethtr it is a fact that inflation and opposition to the major reforms have led to slowing down of pace of economic development of the country;

(b) if so, to what extent these factors are responsible for slowing down of economic development in the country; and

(c) whether any steps are being contemplated in this regard, if so, the details thereof?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF FINANCE (SHRI M. V. CHANDRASHEKHAR MURTHY): (a) No, Sir.

(b) and (c) Does not arise.